

Message Text

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ORIGIN EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 IO-13 ISO-00 SS-15 SIG-03 MMO-01 CIAE-00
DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05
PA-01 SP-02 ICA-11 ACDA-12 AID-05 /100 R

DRAFTED BY EUR/SE:GWCHAPMAN:VSS

APPROVED BY C:MNIMETZ

EUR/SE:RCEWING

EUR/WE:MCRAMERUS

EUR:GSVEST

-----086096 271110Z /11

R 270703Z JUL 78

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY PARIS

INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA

AMEMBASSY ATHENS

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY NICOSIA

AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

USMISSION USNATO

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 189502

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PGOV, PEPR, TU, GR, CY

SUBJECT: DISCUSSION WITH FRENCH AMBASSADOR RE EASTERN
MEDITERRANEAN

1. SUMMARY. FRENCH AMBASSADOR DE LABOULAYE MET WITH
DEPARTMENT COUNSELOR NIMETZ JULY 13 FOR GENERAL REVIEW OF
EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN ISSUES. DE LABOULAYE WAS DOUBTFUL
WHETHER U.S. WOULD HAVE GREATER INFLUENCE OVER TURKS IF
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EMBARGO WERE REPEALED; HE EXPRESSED CONCERN OVER POTENTIAL
IMPACT OF REPEAL IN GREECE AND SUGGESTED WE CONSIDER SOME
MORE POSITIVE COUNTERBALANCE; AND HE DISPLAYED INTEREST IN
THE POSSIBILITY OF A MORE ACTIVE U.S. AND/OR WESTERN ROLE
IN THE CYPRUS ISSUE. NIMETZ SAID THAT WE WOULD GIVE
THOUGHT TO POSSIBILITY OF ENCOURAGING A REASSURING TURKISH
STATEMENT ON THE AEGEAN. END SUMMARY.

2. NIMETZ BRIEFLY TRACED THE EVOLUTION OF ADMINISTRATION'S EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN POLICY. FROM THE START WE HAD SOUGHT TO MOVE FORWARD ON ALL FRONTS, BUT INCREASINGLY HAD COME TO REALIZE THAT THE TURKISH ARMS EMBARGO WAS AN IMPEDIMENT TO PROGRESS. NIMETZ EMPHASIZED THAT REPEAL OF THE EMBARGO, COUPLED AS IT WAS WITH ABANDONMENT OF THE FOUR-YEAR DCA, DID NOT IN ITSELF REPRESENT A THREAT TO GREECE; MOREOVER, THE FACT THAT MILITARY ASSISTANCE TO TURKEY WOULD CONTINUE

TO BE SUBJECT TO ANNUAL REVIEW WOULD ENABLE US TO RETAIN A SIGNIFICANT DEGREE OF INFLUENCE OVER THE TURKS. NIMETZ ALSO STRESSED THAT OUR COMMITMENT TO FOSTERING A SETTLEMENT ON CYPRUS WOULD REMAIN FIRM. AT PRESENT, THE PROSPECTS FOR FORWARD MOVEMENT ON THIS ISSUE WERE DIM, NEITHER SIDE SEEMING TO WANT TO WORK SERIOUSLY FOR A SOLUTION. THERE WAS, BASICALLY, A LACK OF GOODWILL BETWEEN THE TWO COMMUNITIES AND THEIR LEADERSHIPS. NIMETZ SAID THAT WE SHARED THE VIEW THAT CONCRETE PROGRESS TOWARDS A SETTLEMENT WOULD NOT BE POSSIBLE UNTIL THE EMBARGO ISSUE HAD BEEN RESOLVED; THE QUESTION IN OUR MINDS WAS HOW WE COULD MOVE FORWARD IN THE POST-EMBARGO PHASE.

3. DE LABOULAYE SAID THAT HE DID NOT FULLY UNDERSTAND HOW THE U.S. WOULD HAVE MORE RATHER THAN LESS LEVERAGE WITH THE TURKS AFTER THE EMBARGO HAD BEEN LIFTED. NIMETZ
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ALLUDED AGAIN TO THE ANNUAL AUTHORIZATION AND APPROPRIATION OF MILITARY ASSISTANCE, BUT STRESSED THE OVERALL IMPROVEMENT IN OUR RELATIONS WITH ANKARA THAT REMOVAL OF THE EMBARGO WOULD PRODUCE. THE ATMOSPHERE BETWEEN OURSELVES AND THE TURKS HAD BEEN VERY STRAINED, EVEN HOSTILE, SINCE THE IMPOSITION OF THE EMBARGO. WE NOW LOOKED FORWARD TO A PERIOD WHERE THERE WOULD BE MUTUAL TRUST, EASIER ACCESS, AND HENCE GREATER IF MORE SUBTLE INFLUENCE THAN IN THE PAST.

4. DE LABOULAYE NOTED THAT THE FRENCH DID NOT UNDERESTIMATE THE IMPORTANCE OF REINFORCING THE SOUTHERN FLANK OF NATO, BUT WONDERED IF REPEAL OF THE EMBARGO WOULD IN FACT ACCOMPLISH THIS WHEN IT WOULD AT THE SAME TIME WEAKEN THE PRESENT GREEK GOVERNMENT AND MAKE FULL GREEK PARTICIPATION IN THE ALLIANCE PROBLEMATIC. WAS THERE NOT SOMETHING THAT THE U.S. COULD OFFER KARAMANLIS BY WAY OF COMPENSATION THAT HE COULD SUCCESSFULLY SELL TO HIS PEOPLE?

5. NIMETZ NOTED, AT THE OUTSET, THAT EVEN A PERMANENT EMBARGO ON TURKEY WOULD NOT WIN US THE AFFECTION OF GREECE, AND THAT THE GREEKS WERE BEING UNREALISTIC IF THEY BE-

LIEVED THAT WE SHOULD MAINTAIN THE EMBARGO UNTIL ALL GREEK-TURKISH PROBLEMS HAD BEEN RESOLVED. HE WENT ON TO STRESS THAT OUR NEW EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN PROGRAM WAS BALANCED AND CONTAINED BENEFITS FOR GREECE AS WELL AS TURKEY. WE HAD ABANDONED THE TURKISH DCA, AND AS A CONSEQUENCE TURKEY WOULD NOT BE RECEIVING A GUARANTEED DOLS 1 BILLION IN SECURITY ASSISTANCE OVER THE NEXT FOUR YEARS. THIS STEP WOULD MAKE A PARALLEL GREEK DCA UNNECESSARY, A DEVELOPMENT THAT WOULD PROBABLY BE WELCOMED IN ATHENS. WE HAD, MOREOVER, TOLD THE GREEKS THAT WE WERE SYMPATHETIC

TO THEIR DESIRES FOR MEASURED REINTEGRATION INTO THE NATO DEFENSE STRUCTURE, AND THAT WE WOULD USE OUR INFLUENCE WITH THE TURKS TO ASSIST THEM IN THIS PROCESS. NIMETZ
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ADDED THAT, INSOFAR AS REPEAL OF THE EMBARGO CREATING A POLITICAL PROBLEM FOR KARAMANLIS, IT WAS PROBABLY BETTER TO DO IT THIS YEAR RATHER THAN LATER. ELECTIONS HAD ONLY RECENTLY BEEN HELD IN GREECE, AND KARAMANLIS WOULD HAVE A SECURE MAJORITY FOR SEVERAL MORE YEARS. WE FELT CERTAIN THAT THE GREEKS RECOGNIZED THAT REPEAL OF THE EMBARGO WOULD HAVE NO MAJOR MATERIAL IMPACT: OUR ASSISTANCE TO TURKEY WOULD NOT IMMEDIATELY OR NECESSARILY BE INCREASED, AND THE TURKS HAD LIMITED FUNDS WITH WHICH TO MAKE CASH PURCHASES.

6. DE LABOULAYE COMMENTED THAT NONE OF THESE SEEMED TO BE PARTICULARLY POSITIVE BENEFITS. WAS THERE NOT SOMETHING WE COULD DO THAT THE GREEKS WOULD REGARD AS INHERENTLY VALUABLE TO THEM? THE AMBASSADOR NOTED THAT THE AEGEAN SEEMED TO BE THE FOCAL POINT OF CURRENT GREEK INTERESTS, AND SUGGESTED THAT THE U.S. ATTEMPT TO OBTAIN FROM THE TURKS A FIRM GUARANTEE THAT THEY WOULD NOT ENGAGE IN ANY PROVOCATIVE ACTIONS IN THAT AREA. NIMETZ REPLIED THAT IT WAS NOT EASY FOR US TO HELP THE GREEKS ON THE AEGEAN. IN FACT, THEY SEEMED TO WANT LITTLE FROM US THAT WAS NOT INHERENTLY ANTI-TURKISH. NEVERTHELESS, NIMETZ FELT THAT DE LABOULAYE'S WAS A PROMISING SUGGESTION AND HE UNDERTOOK TO GIVE IT FURTHER THOUGHT. HE NOTED THAT CLIFFORD HAD RAISED A SIMILAR IDEA DURING HIS FEBRUARY 1977 MISSION, AND HAD PRESSED IT QUITE STRONGLY IN ANKARA. OUR OWN IMPRESSION WAS THAT THE TURKS HAD NO INTENTION TO MOVE INTO THE DISPUTED WATERS OF THE AEGEAN.

7. TURNING TO THE CYPRUS QUESTION, DE LABOULAYE SAID THAT IT WAS DIFFICULT FOR KYPRIANOU TO MAKE ANY NEW PROPOSALS UNDER PRESENT CIRCUMSTANCES AND THAT THE WESTERN POWERS COULD BE HELPFUL HERE. HE OUTLINED KYPRIANOU'S SUGGESTION,
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FLOATED DURING HIS PARIS VISIT, THAT FRANCE CHAIR A GROUP OF NON-PERMANENT MEMBERS OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL TO WORK ON A SOLUTION. THE FRENCH HAD NOT YET REACTED TO THIS IDEA.

8. NIMETZ SAID THAT WE HAD RECENTLY BEEN THINKING OF WAYS TO MOVE NEGOTIATIONS FORWARD. WE BELIEVED THAT THE INTER-COMMUNAL TALKS COULD NOT BY THEMSELVES GENERATE A SOLUTION OR NEW IDEAS, AND THAT A COOPERATIVE EFFORT INVOLVING THE EUROPEANS AND THE U.S. MIGHT PROVE VERY HELPFUL IN THE FUTURE. WE WOULD BE MOST INTERESTED IN GOF VIEWS ON THIS QUESTION. DE LABOULAYE SAID THAT HE HAD NO SPECIFIC

SUGGESTIONS AT THIS TIME, BUT NOTED THAT THE EC-9 AND THE U.S. HAD ALREADY AGREED ON A SET OF PRINCIPLES FOR A SETTLEMENT. NIMETZ ACKNOWLEDGED THAT THESE PRINCIPLES INDEED WENT FURTHER THAN THE MAKARIOS-DENKTASH GUIDELINES, BUT STRESSED THAT THE CENTRAL PROBLEM NOW WAS ONE OF TRANSLATING GENERALITIES INTO SPECIFICS. WE WOULD NEED TO DEVELOP SOMETHING MORE DETAILED AND USABLE THAN GENERAL PRINCIPLES. NIMETZ POINTED OUT THAT THE TURKS WOULD AT LEAST INITIALLY RESIST ANY IDEA OF OUTSIDE INTERVENTION, BUT WE FELT THAT WE WOULD BE IN A POSITION TO PERSUADE THEM TO COOPERATE ONCE THE EMBARGO HAD BEEN LIFTED.

9. NIMETZ WENT ON TO EXPRESS OUR BELIEF THAT THE SITUATION IN CYPRUS WOULD DETERIORATE IN COMING MONTHS SHOULD THERE BE NO PROGRESS. EXISTING POSITIONS WOULD SIMPLY HARDEN, AND THE STATUS QUO WOULD BE FURTHER ENTRENCHED. WE HAD BEEN DISAPPOINTED THAT SEPARATE MEETINGS IN NEW YORK IN LATE MAY AND EARLY JUNE INVOLVING KYPRIANOU, DENKTASH, AND ECEVIT HAD FOCUSED SO LITTLE ON THE SUBSTANCE OF THE CYPRUS ISSUE; THE MAIN PREOCCUPATION SEEMED TO BE WHO WOULD OR WOULD NOT MEET WITH WHOM. NIMETZ NOTED THAT WE HAD SUCCEEDED IN INDUCING SIGNIFICANT TURKISH MOVEMENT ON

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VAROSHA IN RECENT WEEKS, BUT THAT KYPRIANOU SEEMED TO HAVE NO INTEREST IN FOLLOWING UP ON THESE LEADS. HE WAS OF COURSE ANXIOUS TO SHOW THAT PROGRESS WAS NOT BEING MADE SO AS TO BOLSTER THE CASE FOR MAINTENANCE OF THE EMBARGO. NIMETZ SAID IT WAS OUR FEELING THAT QUITE A FEW EUROPEAN COUNTRIES WOULD LIKE TO SEE PROGRESS ON CYPRUS, IF ONLY BECAUSE THE GREEK-TURKISH RELATIONSHIP WOULD NEVER BE

NORMALIZED UNTIL THERE WAS A SETTLEMENT. WE WOULD BE MOST INTERESTED IN ANY IDEAS THAT THE FRENCH MIGHT HAVE ON THE QUESTION.

10. IN CONCLUDING, DE LABOULAYE MADE CLEAR THAT THE EUROPEANS WERE PREPARED TO ASSIST THE TURKS IN THEIR CURRENT ECONOMIC DIFFICULTIES. HOWEVER, THE TURKS WOULD HAVE TO BE MORE SILENT REGARDING THE AEGEAN ISLANDS AND KEEP THE SISMİK AT HOME. HE STRESSED THAT THE GREEKS DID NOT REPRESENT A THREAT TO THE TURKS IN THE AEGEAN, AND THAT THE ISSUE OF GREEK ARMAMENT OF THE ISLANDS WAS NOT REALLY A SERIOUS ONE. (DE LABOULAYE EXPRESSED SURPRISE THAT THE TURKS HAD RECENTLY APPROACHED US ONCE AGAIN ON THE ISLAND MILITARIZATION QUESTION.) CHRISTOPHER

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: AMBASSADORS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 27 jul 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978STATE189502
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: GWCHAPMAN:VSS
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780308-0071
Format: TEL
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780713/aaaaalbp.tel
Line Count: 238
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 722cd76b-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ORIGIN EUR
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 5
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 18 may 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 1866237
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: DISCUSSION WITH FRENCH AMBASSADOR RE EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN
TAGS: PGOV, PEPR, TU, GR, CY
To: PARIS
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/722cd76b-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014